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## Journal of Romance Studies

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## Journal of Romance Studies

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### SPECIAL ISSUE: THEATRICAL PROCESSES AND THE IBERIAN STAGE

Edited by María Chouza-Calo, Esther Fernández, and Jonathan Thacker

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# The theatre of Agustín Moreto in eighteenth-century Portugal

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## Abstract

Spanish Golden Age theatre triumphed in Portugal, where it was performed and published in its original language. But if the antinomy created by the inexorable conventions of dramaturgy and the change in taste had served Lope de Vega to justify in his *Arte Nuevo* the overcoming of the classicist model, that same antinomy led to questioning baroque theatre a century later. The controversy surrounding the validity of Golden Age theatre connects both countries, which seek to renew the scene by imposing a neoclassical paradigm. The public was reluctant to dismiss a theatre that might seem excessive and outdated but for which no satisfactory alternative had been found. An example of this controversy is Agustín Moreto, a successful playwright during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and not only in Spain. This is the reason why this essay analyses Moreto's impact in Portugal through translations of such representative titles as *O desdem contra desdem* and *Quando a mulher se não guarda, guardalla não pode ser*.

**Keywords:** Spanish theatre, Golden Age, Agustín Moreto, Portugal, eighteenth century, *El desdén, con el desdén, No puede ser el guardar una mujer*

## Portugal and the Spanish theatre of the Golden Age: Stage renewal processes in the eighteenth century

The term *Golden Age*, when applied to Spanish baroque literature, is not chosen randomly, especially in the case of theatre, which is a proof not only of its quality, but also of its quantity and wide circulation.<sup>1</sup> The creation of spaces designed for performance brought about the birth of an industry and a theatre

circuit that favoured the proliferation of companies of professional actors whose itinerant character took the verses of the playwrights of the time to the main cities of the Peninsula. The terms *corrales* in Spain and *pátios de comédias* in Portugal refer to courtyards where plays were performed.<sup>2</sup> Their existence underlines the success of a theatre that did not need to be translated,<sup>3</sup> given that the Hispanic-Portuguese cultural exchanges – enhanced by the marriage policy of the Portuguese Court – had fostered a ‘bilingualism’ in only one direction that allowed the renowned theatre troupes to cross a border that ceased to exist between 1580 and 1640 because of the so-called ‘dual monarchy’. As a consequence of this acclimatization process, the Lisbon printers would publish numerous collections of Spanish Golden Age theatre, which would not be interrupted by the Portuguese Restoration on 1 December 1640, which served as the definitive separation of both crowns.

Nevertheless, if in the seventeenth century the theatrical model exhibited by Lope de Vega in the *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias* (1609) [‘The New Art of Writing Plays’ (1914)] had connected both countries, it is precisely the rejection of that canon that would once again harmonize Spanish and Lusitanian sensibilities in the eighteenth century. A harmony dazzled by the radiance that emanated from French Classicism, which fostered a theatre that was loyal to the precepts and *le bon sens* [‘good sense’] – elements that had been absent from the Spanish baroque theatre – this theatre would enclose ‘los preceptos con seis llaves’ (Vega 1609: v. 41) [‘the precepts with six keys’ (Vega 1914: 24)] and achieve overwhelming success by betting on the ability of one’s imagination to circumvent spatial or chronological limits.

In Portugal, the process of renewing the stage did not turn out to be as easy or effective as the supporters of a neoclassical theatre would have liked, despite the proliferation of academies – such as the *Arcádia Lusitana* [‘Portuguese Arcadia’] (1756) or the *Nova Arcádia* [‘New Arcadia’] (1790) – which would justify the new aesthetic guidelines and propose ‘a restauração do teatro português, que se encontrava debaixo da influência do teatro espanhol e italiano’ [‘to restore the Portuguese theatre, which was under the influence of Spanish and Italian theatre’] (Carreira 1988: 18) or the explicitness of titles such as *Teatro Novo* [‘New Theatre’] by Correia Garção, performed in 1766 at the *Teatro do Bairro Alto*.<sup>4</sup>

In 1697, the Count of Ericeira translated Boileau’s *Art poétique* [‘The Art of Poetry’], although it circulated in manuscript form and was not published until 1793 in the *Almanaque das musas* [‘Almanac of the Muses’]. In contrast, the *Comedia de comedias* [‘Comedy of Comedies’] (1732) by Tomás Pinto Brandão

exemplifies the fame and standing of Spanish theatre,<sup>5</sup> as well as the publication in 1739 of the *Discurso apologético em defesa do teatro espanhol* [‘Apologetic speech in defence of Spanish theatre’] by the Marquis of Valença, who in 1747 would also publish a *Crítica* [‘Critique’] to *Le Cid* of Corneille. Anonymous *Notas* [‘Notes’] (1747 or 1748) – although attributed to Alexandre de Gusmão – responded to the *Crítica*, praising the neoclassicism of French theatre while pointing out ‘que o teatro espanhol é hoje o mais defeituoso’ [‘that the Spanish theatre is today the most defective’] (Saraiva and Lopes 1996: 595). The Marquis published a *Resposta* [‘Response’] in 1748.

In spite of the evolution in the tastes of the aristocracy – reflected in the news of the *Gazeta de Lisboa* [‘Lisbon Gazette’] – who now liked musical genres such as serenades, which would be performed at royal anniversaries after 1719 (Frèches 1965: 96), operas and melodramas from Italy that flooded the royal theatres, such as the *Academia da Trindade* [‘Trinity Academy’] or the *Pátio da Rua dos Condes* [‘Courtyard of the *Rua dos Condes*’], as well as ‘a avassaladora afluência de textos dramáticos franceses e italianos’ [‘an overwhelming influx of French and Italian dramatic texts’] (Miranda 1978: 372),<sup>6</sup> there seemed to be no playhouse capable of banishing the Spanish Golden Age theatre. This was evidenced by the fact that the *Real Mesa Censória* [‘Royal Board of Censorship’], created on 18 May 1768, adopted a ‘singular atitude de zelo crítico’ [‘singular attitude of critical zeal’] in order to measure the proximity ‘ao gosto das Comedias Hespanholas’ [‘to the taste of Spanish comedies’] (Miranda 1978: 376). The breaching of this intangible limit prevented the publication of operas, comedies, and *entremeses* [‘interludes’].<sup>7</sup> Apparently, an attempt was made to respect the original language, as recounted by an English traveller who attended a performance in a private home:

Os actores eram na sua maioria profissionais idos de Lisboa, e o espectáculo compunha-se de três partes. A primeira era uma comédia portuguesa, de mistura com alguns cantos; a segunda uma amálgama extravagante de coisas burlescas e sérias, e a última uma farsa espanhola ou entremez, em que os actores tentavam falar espanhol, mas muito mal. (Letter XLI [Lisbon, 1779] from Arthur William Costigan to his brother, cited in Carreira 1988: 479)

[The actors were mostly professionals from Lisbon, and the show was in three parts. The first was a Portuguese comedy, with some songs mixed in, the second an extravagant mixture of comic and serious things, and the

last a Spanish farce or *entremés*, in which the actors tried to speak Spanish, but very badly.]

This *entremés* ends 'en baile o en palos' ['in song or with a beating'], as was customary in the genre:

Esta facécia provocou aplausos, e em seguida, os dois frades, o rapaz e a mulher do sapateiro, armados cada um dum correa, começaram a bater uns nos outros, com grande gáudio do público. É em geral assim que acaba a maior parte das peças espanholas.

Estas farsas pareciam divertir uma brilhante sociedade; mas devo dizer que são espectáculos calculados para divertir o povo, que prefere sempre o que se afigura mais grosseiro, inverosímil e também grandiloquo. (Ibid. cited in Carreira 1988: 484)

[This joke led to applause, and immediately the two friars, the boy, and the shoemaker's wife, each armed with a strap, began to hit each other, to the great rejoicing of the public. And in general, this is how most of the Spanish pieces end.

These farces seemed to amuse a brilliant society; but I must say that they are shows designed to amuse the folk, who always prefer what seems rude, implausible, and also pompous.]

The audience of the 'Teatro de Cordel' ['Street Theatre'] is described here.<sup>8</sup> This was another type of performance whose success also contradicted this new enlightened proposal that in fact encompassed the replacement process of one foreign dramaturgy by another.<sup>9</sup> Admiration for the French theatre did not result in attempts to imitate or surpass it, although members of the *Arcádia Lusitana* tried to write tragedies on national themes and include contemporary types in their comedies.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the complete control of the censorship over the plays that were performed in the theatres of Lisbon and Porto, 'a passividade e negligência dos poucos empresários portugueses, eles próprios desinteressados do teatro nacional' ['the passiveness and negligence of the few Portuguese impresarios, themselves uninterested in the national theatre'] (Rodrigues 1987: 270), resulted in 'algumas tentativas dramáticas de índole académica ou um teatro de cordel' ['some dramatic attempts of an academic nature or else street theatre'] (Almeida Rodrigues 1980: 39), and the applause that the public would continue to reserve for the baroque theatre led to Portugal failing to produce a dramatic model that

would leave a distinctive mark on the European canon, as had already happened in the seventeenth century.

**Agustín Moreto's theatre in Portugal: Creative processes in *O desdem contra desdem* and *Quando a mulher se não guarda, guardalla não pode ser***

As is well known, theatre is a dynamic practice in continuous change, liable to have multiple lives beyond the page and the stage. Evolution is the key, not only for dramatic texts but also for its audience, as Lope de Vega had realized:

y escribo por el arte que inventaron  
los que el vulgar aplauso pretendieron,  
porque, como las paga el vulgo, es justo  
hablarle en necio para darle gusto. (Vega 1609: vv. 45–48)

[and I write in accordance with that art which they devised who aspired to the applause of the crowd; for, since the crowd pays for the comedies, it is fitting to talk foolishly to it to satisfy its taste (Vega 1914: 24–25)]

Therefore, considering public impact on the plays, it is not surprising that Golden Age theatre would continue to be published and performed in the eighteenth century, although no longer in Spanish but translated into Portuguese and with subtle adaptations that would make it suitable for the Lusitanian spectator. These adjustments would contribute to a successful application to a new institution approved by Maria I on 21 June 1787, the *Real Mesa da Comissão Geral sobre o Exame e Censura dos Livros* ['Royal Board of the General Commission on the Examination and Censorship of Books'] which would be in charge of authorizing the publication of the two plays of Agustín Moreto – (1618–1669), playwright whose fame abroad was equal to Calderón's – which we will study.<sup>11</sup> Both comedies succeeded both in the palace and in the courtyards when they were premiered and crossed the Iberian borders to be performed in the New World.<sup>12</sup>

One of Moreto's most famous pieces is *El desdén, con el desdén* ['Spite for Spite'] (*Primera parte de comedias de Agustín Moreto*, 1654), published by the office of José de Aquino Bulhoens in 1791 'Com licença da Real Meza da Comissão Geral sobre o Exame e Censura dos Livros' ['with a license from the Royal Board of the General Commission on the Examination and Censorship

of Books'] as *O desdem contra desdem*, of which there was already a 1785 version entitled *Honestos desdems de amor* ['Honest Disdain for Love'] that was published in Lisbon by the office of Francisco Borges de Sousa and translated by the Portuguese comedian Pedro António Pereira. Pereira claimed that it had been 'ampliada e correcta por hum novo curioso' ['extended and corrected by a curious new person'] – which starts by changing the name of the *gracioso* ['comedian'] from Polilla to Caxopo – and also received, in the end, the approval of the *Real Mesa Censória*.

Nicolau Luiz da Silva's 1791 Portuguese translation of *El desdén, con el desdén* is quite true to the original; but, unlike the 1785 version, it omits the city where the action is set, Barcelona, perhaps to facilitate the viewer's immersion in a timeless fiction that could happen anywhere: 'esta cidade' ['this city'] (3). The musicians also do not appear, and their songs are either eliminated – as well as the dances – or delivered by a *dama* ['lady']. However, the most outstanding element in this translation is the suppression of most of the jokes uttered by the *gracioso*, a mark of Moreto's theatrical style, which did not always find resonance in the Portuguese tradition, hence they could not be maintained in the translated text. Furthermore, some would be too daring, and Portuguese censorship not only evaluated the dramatic quality, but also the decorum, good taste and the correct use of language (Miranda 1976): 'Para las dueñas nació' (I, v. 730) (Moreto 2008) ['I live to serve. That's who I am' (Moreto 1995)]<sup>13</sup> becomes 'Estas ordens serão leis' ['These orders will be laws'] (11).

Digressions typical of the Golden Age theatre that do not provide decisive information but could tire the eighteenth-century public are also suppressed (I, vv. 51–54, 842–852; II, vv. 1154–1161, 1335–1344; III, vv. 2059–2063, 2152–2169, 2294–2299), as happens with Carlos's long account of Diana's reasons for despising love (I, vv. 202–252, 263–270, 280–352, 359–372) or the quarrel between Carlos and Polilla (II, vv. 1788–1826, 1851–1866). Sometimes a language that was too anchored in the previous century is also updated. This feature is emphasized in Act III of *O desdem contra desdem*, where it happens with entire sections.

In addition to this, religious expressions are eliminated. The same occurs with references to Cupid (III vv. 2790–2793) and biblical allusions such as 'Seré Sinón y ayuda' (I, v. 540) ['I could build a Trojan horse' (Moreto 1995)],<sup>14</sup> which becomes 'Oh que sou fino / para estas cousas?' ['Oh, how clever I am about these things?'] (8), as well as with jokes related to the name of the *gracioso*, 'Polilla' ['Moth'] (I, vv. 735–738), which in Moreto's theatre often had a double meaning:

CARLOS. ¿Sabraste introducir?  
POLILLA. Y hacer pesquisas.  
¿Yo Polilla no soy? ¿Eso prevenies?  
Me sabré introducir en sus camisas.  
CARLOS. Pues ya a mi amor le doy los parabienes.  
Vamos, que si eso importa a las marañas,  
Yo sabré apolillarle las entrañas.

(I, vv. 541–546)

CARLOS. Como poderás  
agora introduzir-te na presença  
de Diana?  
POLILHA Não lhe importe o como: basta  
em pouco tempo vello.  
CARLOS. Pois já dou os parabens ao meu  
desvello. *Vai-se*  
POLILHA. Vamos andando, pois com mil  
patranhas  
lhe encaixarei amores nas entra-  
nhas. *Vai-se*

(I, 8)

[CARLOS. *Can you really get in?*  
POLILLA. *To have a look around?*  
It's me, sir, Moth! What are you thinking of?  
I can chew a hole in the thickest gown!  
CARLOS. Then let me propose a toast! Here's to my love!  
Come on – if that's the plot, I know my part;  
I can nibble the rest of the way – into her heart.

(I, vv. 541–546)

Music is an important part of Golden Age theatre, serving as an environmental context but also taking on dramatic functions to express hidden feelings or silenced truths that cannot be incorporated into discourse other than in the form of a song (Álvarez Sellers 1997). However, the Portuguese translation eliminates the presence of the musicians, but not their words (I, vv. 547–550, 643–646), which are recited by Fenisa as if they were part of a letter, introduced

by verses not in the original piece: 'Esse papel sublimado / me lêde' (8) – like the lady herself, who does not appear in Moreto's scene<sup>15</sup> – and in the same way another musical intervention is eliminated in Act III, where it is Polilla who substitutes it by reading one more letter (29). In addition, the songs and *danza de la mudanza* ['dance of change'] in Act II – which is performed with masks – are suppressed. In this way, the delivery of ribbons whose colours symbolize feelings, a cliché of the Golden Age, would undoubtedly contribute to dazzling the public and accentuating the piece's courtly character but it is absent in the Portuguese version.<sup>16</sup>

Perhaps the most remarkable element is the inclusion of the unity of time changing 'days' into 'morning':

DIANA. Días ha que está trabada  
esta batalla en mi pecho,  
y desde ayer me he vencido.  
(III, vv. 2396–2398)

DIANA. Desde esta manhã, que trago  
a batalha no meu peito;  
e agora me resolvi.  
(III, 31)

[DIANA. For days this terrible battle has  
Been raging in my breast,  
And yesterday I gave up the fight.  
(III, vv. 2391–2393)]

And the different ending that is proposed in each Act:

CARLOS. Guardeos el Cielo.  
DIANA. ([Ap] Aunque me cueste un cuidado,  
he de rendir a este necio.  
(I, vv. 1044–1046)

CARLOS. (Toda a mina alma trespaso  
neste cruel fingimento.) *á parte*  
DIANA. (A custa do meu cuidado  
Hei-de vencer este negocio.) *á parte*

AMB[OS]. Porque às vezes hum desdem  
obriga mais que hum affecto. *Cantão, e vão-se*  
(I, 15)

[CARLOS. *Go in peace with the Lord.*  
DIANA. (*Whatever* the cost, I've got to teach  
This fool a lesson – I don't care how!)  
(I, vv. 1044–1046)]

These verses sung in duet replace a brief dialogue between Carlos and Polilla (I, vv. 1047–1056) that does not provide relevant information. Nevertheless, there is a striking difference between the endings of Act II because the Portuguese version adds seventeen verses in which Diana fears falling into 'algum delirio' ['some delirium'] (26) and which have Polilla summarizing the events through song while probably making ridiculous faces (26–27). What is more, in Moreto's version, Polilla is the one in charge of ending the comedy by asking for an applause (III, vv. 2928–2934) and avoids marrying Laura, while in *O desdem contra desdem* he agrees to take her hand. Here, it is Diana who asks for 'o geral applauso' and everyone chimes in with 'Hum desprezo rigoroso / por outro desdem postrado' (38).

There is a greater loyalty to Moreto's piece *No puede ser* ['It Cannot Be'] (second part of comedies, 1676),<sup>17</sup> entitled in the eighteenth century *No puede ser el guardar una mujer* (Moreto 2016: 49) and found in *Quando a mulher senão guarda guardalla não pode ser* ['If a woman does not protect herself, then there is no way she can be protected'], published in Lisbon in the Office of Francisco Borges de Sousa in 1792, and which was also translated in England,<sup>18</sup> France, Italy, and Germany (Moreto 2016: 51–52).

Nonetheless, the name of the servant is changed from Manuela to Micaela while some errors from the original play are corrected – 'El Petrarca en Francia fue' (I, v. 113) ['Petrarch in France was'] was, in fact, 'Petrarca em Roma tambem' (4) ['Petrarch in Rome too'] – and, at times, the translator does not seem to understand the meaning of the Spanish verses or considers that these meanings would escape the Portuguese public. Thus, for example, there is talk of the usefulness of poetry – 'Assim toda útil fora' (4) – when what Tarugo wanted poetry to be was 'genovesa' (I, v. 100), that is, to make money, alluding to the Genoese reputation as merchants. A word as specific as 'Bujerías' (II, v. 1691) – 'merchandise of tin, iron, glass, etc., of little value and price' (*DRAE*) – becomes 'Galanteios' ['courtship'] (23), in a similar way



in which 'capeadores' (II, v. 1963), whose original meaning – 'the thief who goes out at night to steal capes from those who walk the streets' (*DA*) – is lost in the generic 'ladrões' ['thieves'] (26). The expression 'armársela con queso' (III, v. 3059) – to set a trap – is explained by saying, 'Isso he a ratoeira armar com queijo' (37). A metatheatrical allusion, characteristic of Moreto's theatre (Álvarez Sellers 2019a: 21–22), related to the fear of the public's rejection is also updated: '¿Ahora la había de errar, / en la tercera jornada / para que a silbos me abriesen?' ['Now am I going to spoil it, / in the third Act, / to get booed?'] (III, vv. 2831–2833) becomes 'para que a páos me moessem?' ['to get beaten?'] (36).

The play's action is transferred from Madrid (II, v. 1565; III, v. 2864, v. 2892) to Lisbon (21; 37). Consequently, if the excuse with which Tarugo enters Doña Inés's house is to measure her for the dress that she will wear 'el día del Sotillo' (I, v. 894), a festival that was celebrated on 1 May on an island in the Manzanares River, such an allusion must necessarily be substituted with any given day – 'para o dia, que pedistes' (13) – and neither can Tarugo go out dressed as a gentleman of the Order of Santiago ['St James'] (II, v. 1572). Allusions to Spanish America are eliminated, such as 'México' (II, v. 1609), which becomes 'India' (22) or 'júcaras de Mechoacán' (II, v. 1689), substituted for 'xícaras de fino esmalte' ['small bowl of fine glaze'] (23),<sup>19</sup> and more changes are also needed: 'Retiro, Casa de Campo, / Aranjuez' ['The Buen Retiro Gardens, the Casa de Campo, / Aranjuez'] (III, vv. 2291–2292) becomes 'retiros, casas de campo; / porém' ['retreats, country houses: / however'] (30).

The chronological references limit what happens, and 'Este año' ['This year'] (I, v. 885) is changed to 'hoje' ['today'] (13), in an attempt, perhaps, to follow the unity of time, although in Act III 'Oito días' ['Eight days'] (28) elapse (III, v. 2137), which seemed to Tarugo more like years – 'cuarenta años' ['forty years'] (III, v. 2140) or 'vinte' ['twenty'] (28).

The language is updated and also the currency changes from 'ducados' to 'cruzados' or 'reis', as well as the amount. Some verses (I, vv. 406–410) and allusions are omitted, such as that of the 'hilo portugués' ['Portuguese thread'] (v. 671), highly appreciated in Castile, or that of the 'Cien monjas' ['One hundred nuns'] (III, v. 2163) occupied in pleasing Tarugo,<sup>20</sup> while others are added, probably because of reasons related to rhyme. Religious expressions are toned down. However, most of the jokes – even about Jews (III, vv. 2196–2199 and p. 29; vv. 2873–2874 and p. 36) – are maintained, and also the performance of the musicians, which is not as verbose as in *El desdén*.

In both plays, references to contemporary pieces or characters well known to the seventeenth-century audience, but which would probably escape the eighteenth-century public, are substituted or explained, as in *El desdén* when Polilla indicates 'que eso es ser / el perro del hortelano' (III, v. 2143), alluding to the piece by Lope de Vega ['The Dog in the Manger'] – also starring a Diana who feels scorned – and the Portuguese translator clarifies it: 'porque o mais só vem a ser / morrer de fome, e matar' ['because everything else comes down to dying of starvation and killing'] (29) and in *No puede ser* the comparison between D. Pedro and 'el celoso extremeño' ['The Jealous Extremaduran'] (I, v. 190), a Cervantes character, is reduced to 'hum zeloso estupendo' (5), and the wit of Juanelo (I, v. 634; II, v. 1842) – Turriano, who invented a hydraulic machine to transport river water to Toledo – to 'o mais esperto' ['the cleverest'] (10), as well as the value of the Cid Campeador, given that D. Crisanto ceases to be 'valiente como Rodrigo' (II, v. 1970) to remain 'valiente como hum mosquito' ['brave as a mosquito'] (26). Tarugo does not want to be 'el sastre del Campillo' ['the tailor of Campillo'] (II, v. 2000) – 'who offered the thread and sewed for nothing' – but hopes to achieve the caresses of Manuela, as the Portuguese text explains: 'regocijar-me hum bocado / na delicia dos teus mimos' (26).

They were not the only plays by Moreto in Portugal, considering that at the end of the edition of *O desdem contra desdem* a 'Note' is included that indicates where *Industrias contra finezas* ['Industry versus Finesse'] (1666) can be obtained:<sup>21</sup>

Na mão de Romão José, homem cego, na esquina das Casaz dos Padres de S. Domingos no Rocio, voltando para a Praça da Figueira, ou em sua Caza na Rua das Atafonas se acharão as Comedias seguintes. *As Astucias Defrontim, Industrias contra Finezas, Os dous Amantes em Africa, a Virtuosa Pamella*, e outras muitas mais qualidades de Comedias, e Entremezes, e Elogos, e varias qualidades de Livros. (Andioc and Coulon 1996, II: 744)

[In the hands of *Romão José*, a blind man, on the corner of the Houses of the Fathers of S. *Domingos* in the *Rocio*, going back to the *Figueira* square, or in his House on the *Rua das Atafonas*, the following comedies will be found. *As Astucias Defrontim, Industrias contra Finezas, Os dous Amantes em Africa, a Virtuosa Pamella*, and many other qualities of Comedies, and *Entremeses*, and Eclogues, and various qualities of Books.]

### Dramatic processes toward a theatrical Iberian canon

The situation described on the Portuguese stage was not unusual. In Spain, plays by French and Italian authors were also performed in the last decade of the eighteenth century, but in fewer numbers than those by Spanish authors from the eighteenth century and, above all, from the seventeenth century (Sala Valldaura 1999: 20–23). Thus, both *El desdén, con el desdén* and *No puede ser* were still on the bill when their Portuguese versions were published. Both were among the most staged plays in Barcelona between 1790 and 1799, with a similar number of performances: seventeen of *El desdén* and sixteen of *No puede ser* (Sala Valldaura 1999: 21). In Madrid, there are records of performances from 1708 to 1808 of both *El desdén* (Andioc and Coulon 1996, II: 687)<sup>22</sup> and *No puede ser* (ibid.: 794).

To sum up, the Age of Enlightenment intended to become the setting for the attempt to outperform the theatre that had triumphed in *corrales* and *pátios*, but had not yet been rejected by the public. To achieve this, a different archetype, which would suppress the excesses, was necessary. In this sense, both Spanish and Portuguese intellectuals set out to build a new paradigm based on foundations as solid as reason and ‘good taste’ (Álvarez Sellers 2019b).

In other words, the data show that the baroque theatre had not been surpassed by the enlightened proposals either in Spain or in Portugal. The cultural disconnection that had been developing between the two countries under the political circumstances that definitively separated them after the Restoration process (1640–1668) made it necessary for the same theatre that had been so successful in the *pátios de comédias* of the seventeenth century in Spanish, to be translated into Portuguese. Having said that, as we have seen in the examples by Moreto, it was enough to introduce slight alterations to update an old-fashioned or specific local language, contextualize the action in a space familiar to the Lusitanian public, reduce courtly elements such as music and dances or decrease a comic load that could seem excessive to the censorship to which the plays were submitted.

Moreto continued to be a successful playwright, and not only in Portugal, but also in the rest of Europe, given that *El desdén* inspired *La Princesse d'Élide* [‘The Elide Princess’] (1664) by Molière and *La Principessa filosofa* [‘The Princess Philosopher’] (1772) by Carlo Gozzi (Moreto 2008: 406). In the New World, there are representations in Mexico City since 1665, and in Lima since 1659 (Hesse 1954: 15) – and in other Mexican and Peruvian cities as well as in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Cuba, Colombia, and Brazil.

The abundance of testimonies about the translations (Martínez Gutiérrez 2020), editions and performances of his plays abroad leaves a record of the interest that universal passions such as love, jealousy, wit, or disdain arouse, whatever the language in which they were expressed. Lisbon, Madrid, and Barcelona spoke different languages, but the audience read or went to attend similar dramatic repertoires. Despite the postulates of academics in favour of a theatre guided by *le bon sens*, Portuguese spectators, like those of the rest of the Peninsula, continued to enjoy the verses of the Golden Age, although they were reviled in the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, considered now with the perspective that the passage of time offers, those verses have been revealed as the only bridge capable of sustaining an Iberian canon that could not survive in any other space than the one in which all dreams can be accommodated: the stage.

### Notes

- 1 This contribution is part of the R&D Excellence Project of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, ref. PID2020-117749GB-C22.
- 2 Sequeira (1947: 223) considers them the legacy from the Court of Madrid to the Court of Lisbon.
- 3 ‘Pode escrever-se, sem margem de erro, que as companhias espanholas tiveram, na prática, o exclusivo do desempenho de comédias em Portugal, até aos tempos de D. João V; foi nessa altura que, no Pátio das Arcas, se revelaram os primeiros dramas falados em português e por portugueses’ [‘One can write, without margin of error, that in practice, the Spanish companies had the exclusive representation of comedies in Portugal, until the time of D. João V; it was at that point when, in the *Pátio das Arcas*, the first dramas spoken in Portuguese and by Portuguese appeared’] (Rodrigues 1987: 254). However, Spanish actors would continue to perform in the eighteenth century: ‘Francisco de Sousa de Almeida publie, en août 1719, sa pièce jouée l’année précédente, *El Triunfo por la Discreta*. Sans doute les acteurs étaient-ils espagnols’ [‘Francisco de Sousa de Almeida publishes, in August 1719, his piece, which was performed the previous year, *El Triunfo por la Discreta*. Without a doubt the actors were Spanish’] (Frèches 1965: 97). All translations are my own, unless otherwise stated.
- 4 Nonetheless, the play was not liked: ‘Note-se que as tentativas dramáticas dos arcades foram sempre mal recebidas pelo público e se revelam hoje de escassíssimo préstimo teatral. *O Teatro Novo*, por exemplo, foi ruidosamente pateado’ [‘Note that the dramatic attempts of the Arcades were always badly received by the audience and today they are revealed to be of very little theatrical utility. *O Teatro Novo*, for example, was loudly stomped out’] (Rodrigues 1987: 284).

- 5 A list of comedies also provided a text signed by a certain Sacristão de São Trocas, *Memoria de las más famosas comedias que hasta aora han salido en España* [‘Report of the most famous comedies that have come out in Spain so far’], published in *Monstruosidades do Tempo e da Fortuna* [‘Monstrosities of Time and Fortune’] (Lisbon, Viúva [‘Widow’] Sousa Neves, 1888). See Reyes and Bolaños (1993: 241–242).
- 6 Rebello (1984: 164–166) gives an account of the translations of French plays in Portugal and Castro (1974) points out the surprising persistence of the Spanish authors in the face of the growing influence of the Italians.
- 7 See Miranda (1978: 376–380), Rodrigues (1987: 276), and Carreira (1988: 272–274).
- 8 The name ‘parece advir do facto de estes impressos serem vendidos normalmente por cegos, às esquinas das ruas da Baixa, que os penduravam em cordéis esticados por pregos enfiados nas paredes [...]’. Têm em média 19 cm de altura, de 36 a 40 páginas se são comédias, dramas ou tragédias, e de 16 páginas se são entremezes’ [‘seems to come from the fact that these prints were normally sold by blind people, on the street corners of the *Baixa*, who hung them on strings stretched by nails driven into the walls. [...]’. They have an average height of 19 cm, from thirty-six to forty pages if they are comedies, dramas or tragedies, and sixteen pages if they are *entremezes*’] (Carreira 1988: 20).
- 9 ‘Dominando o repertório português através de um verdadeiro caudal de traduções e adaptações, o filão francês acabará por ser o grande alvo a bater por todos os que meditavam sobre o ressurgimento de uma dramaturgia nacional’ [‘Dominating the Portuguese repertoire through a veritable flow of translations and adaptations, the French vein will end up being the great target to be beaten by all those who meditated on the resurgence of a national dramaturgy’] (Barata 1991: 222).
- 10 ‘Reentra nos objectivos da Arcádia Lusitana a promoção do teatro nacional. Nas suas tragédias, os Arcades trataram temas da história pátria e, nas comédias, puseram em cena personagens que encarnam os novos gostos burgueses e tipologias de impacto epocal, como o pelintra, o mineiro, o cenarista, o mestre de música. Todavia, o público não se sentiu atraído pelas suas peças’ [‘The promotion of national theatre returns to the objectives of the *Arcádia Lusitana*. In their tragedies, the Arcades dealt with themes of the country’s history and, in the comedies, they put on stage characters that embody the new bourgeois tastes and impact typologies at the time, such as the pompous, the new rich man, the stage designer, the music teacher. However, the public was not attracted to their pieces’] (Marnoto 2010: 299).
- 11 He was the author with the most plays published in the forty-seven volumes of *Comedias Escogidas* [‘Selected Comedies’] printed in the seventeenth century (Lobato 2010: 69), surpassed only by Calderón de la Barca, with whom he shared a poster abroad, as in Amsterdam, whose Sephardic colonies were fond of Spanish baroque theatre and both authors were the most performed (Boer

- 1992: 168). *No puede ser* was published in Amsterdam in the collection *Doce comedias* [‘Twelve Comedies’] (1697) (Lobato 2016: 49).
- 12 *El desdén, con el desdén* ‘obtuvo el favor del público, tanto de corral como de palacio y se encuentra entre las obras más veces representadas en los siglos XVII y XVIII’ [‘was taken into favour by the public, both in the courtyards and in the palace and is among the plays performed most often in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries’] (Lobato 2008: 406). *No puede ser* was premiered in the palace for King Felipe IV in Madrid, on 28 and 29 November 1659 by the Sebastián de Prado’s company, and Juan de la Calle took it to the courtyards that same month, and it continued to be performed: nine times in Madrid from 1672 to 1692 and seven in Valladolid from 1681 to 1696 (Lobato 2016: 50). In Mexico, *El desdén, con el desdén* continued to be performed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Hernández 2008). *No puede ser* was ‘una de las comedias más representadas durante el siglo XVIII, exportándose muy pronto a las colonias españolas’ [‘was one of the most performed comedies during the eighteenth century, being exported very soon to the Spanish colonies’], where it took the stage in Mexico, Lima, Guayaquil, and Bogotá (Ed. Lobato 2016: 51).
- 13 This is the English translation by Matthews (*Spite for Spite* [1995]), where ‘dueñas’ is deleted. The word ‘dueñas’ has a double meaning: ‘Person who has control or dominance over someone or something’ and ‘Woman who has not a maiden’ (*DRAE*).
- 14 Sinón was a Greek warrior who persuaded the Trojans to accept the Trojan horse.
- 15 Rico (Moreto 1971: 29–31) underlines that it could have been released as a court play, given that a role like Fenisa’s would have been played by a lady and would then be eliminated: ‘No deja de ser curioso que en la comedia burlesca [anónima, anterior a 1744] del mismo título ya no quedan restos de Fenisa’ [‘It is still curious that in the satirical comedy (anonymous, prior to 1744) of the same title there are no remains of Fenisa’] (Moreto 2008: 403).
- 16 Francisca Bezón’s company made a private representation of *El desdén, con el desdén* in 1683 or 1684 in the Alcázar of Madrid (Subirats 1977: 437). In some letters dated 20 June 1688 in Lisbon, a private representation is mentioned in the Palace to mark the anniversary of the Princess (*DICAT*).
- 17 It had already been published in the collection of *Comedias Escogidas* (1661, Part XIV; c.1675, Part XLI).
- 18 *Tarugo’s Wiles, or the Coffee House* by Thomas St Serfe, performed in 1667 without any success (Sánchez Imizcoz 2004: 1603) and *Sir Courtly Nice or It cannot be* (1685) by John Crowne, a fusion with *El lindo don Diego* by Agustín Moreto. ‘After the Restoration the “Spanish plots” comprised the earliest distinctive subgenre to appear’ (Loftis 1984: 247). Unlike what happens in other countries, in England the interest of Spanish drama, ‘so far as we can judge by the number of translations that were made, was greatest between

- 1853 and 1877, after romanticism had lost its supremacy in literature' (Hills 1920: 98). There are two translations of *El desdén, con el desdén*.
- 19 The 'Chocolate de Guajaca' ['Chocolate from Guajaca'] (*El desdén*, II, v. 1687; *O desdem*, 23) and the 'júcaras de Mechoacán' (II, v. 1689) were such highly valued goods that the Portuguese banker Manuel José Cortizos give them to Carlos II in 1678, when the king became emancipated from his mother and changed his residence (Sanz Ayán 2009: 89).
- 20 Perhaps it was to avoid censorship, given that the nuns are not strange characters to the Portuguese theatre (See Camões 2017): 'Esta peça acabou por uma cena de uma qualidade que agrada sempre aos portugueses, uma conversação de algumas freiras com os seus galãs, no locutório de um convento.' ['This piece ended with a scene that always pleases the Portuguese audience, a conversation of some nuns with their gallants, in the convent's parlour'] (Letter XLI (Lisbon, 1779) from A. W. Costigan to his brother, cited by Carreira 1988: 483).
- 21 In the National Library of Portugal there are a large number of copies of Moreto's plays.
- 22 In Madrid, it was performed 'al menos 33 veces' ['at least 33 times'] between 1708 and 1719, and 'otras 81 veces' ['another 81 times'] throughout the eighteenth century (Moreto 2008: 407).

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SPECIAL ISSUE: THEATRICAL PROCESSES AND THE IBERIAN STAGE

Edited by María Chouza-Calo, Esther Fernández, and Jonathan Thacker

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*María Chouza-Calo, Esther Fernández, and Jonathan Thacker*

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